

Appl. No.: 10/814,068
Amdt. dated 02/14/2005
Reply to Office action of November 16, 2004

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

The amendments above, and the remarks below, are in response to the Office Action directed to the above-listed patent application and mailed on November 16, 2004. In the Office Action, all of the pending Claims 1-3 were rejected. In particular, Claim 1 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. §102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,240,051 to Quick et al. ("Quick"). In addition, Claims 2 and 3 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) over a combination of Quick and U.S. Patent No. 4,547,255 to Yow ("Yow").

In the Office Action it was alleged that Quick, in reference to Figures 3 and 5, discloses a clamping system that anticipates Claim 1 of the present application. Quick discloses a clamp engaging system for a wood-gluing machine that includes an upper platen of hold down bars 77, 78 and a clamping device having movable jaws 120, 122. However, the movable jaws 120, 122 are supported beneath the hold down bars.

Yow discloses the use of pusher shoes 22, as shown in Figure 2, that urge wood elements 12 into engagement with each other and a platen surface 40 of a top platen 18 that urges the wood elements against a bed surface 34. However, similar to Quick, the pusher shoes are positioned below the top platen surface.

In the present invention as described in Claim 1, the clamping device is supported above the upper platen and includes offset clamping bars extending through the lower surface of the upper platen. As noted on page 11, lines 14-19 of the present application, positioning of the clamping device above the upper platen advantageously reduces the floor space occupied by the press station. In Quick the movable jaws are supported beneath the hold down bars. In yow the pushers shoes are positioned below the top platen surface. Therefore, neither Quick, nor Yow, discloses the present invention as described in Claim 1.

Applicant could find no suggestion in Quick or Yow for relocating the hold down bars or pusher shoes to free up floor space. Even if such a suggestion were found, Quick, Yow and the remaining cited references do not appear to disclose supporting a clamping device above an upper platen. Therefore, Quick, Yow and the remaining cited references do not teach or suggest, alone and in combination, the present invention as described in Claim 1. The remaining Claims

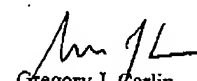
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2 and 3 depend from, and further patentably distinguish, Claim 1. As a result, the rejections of Claims 1-3 under 35 U.S.C. §§102(b) and 103(a) have been overcome.

In view of the remarks and amendments presented above, it is respectfully submitted that Claims 1-3 of the present application are in condition for allowance. It is respectfully requested that a Notice of Allowance be issued in due course. The Examiner is requested to contact Applicants' undersigned attorney to resolve any remaining issues in order to expedite examination of the present application.

It is not believed that extensions of time or fees for net addition of claims are required, beyond those that may otherwise be provided for in documents accompanying this paper. However, in the event that additional extensions of time are necessary to allow consideration of this paper, such extensions are hereby petitioned under 37 CFR § 1.136(a), and any fee required therefore (including fees for net addition of claims) is hereby authorized to be charged to Deposit Account No. 16-0605.

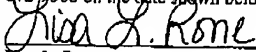
Respectfully submitted,

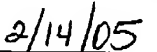

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